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BOTANICAL GAZETTE.

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A NEW CUSCUTA, new at least to North America, comes now from California. A great wanderer is this *C. corymbosa*, which nearly 40 years ago stirred up the botanists of Europe, and the agriculturists not less. This interesting plant has quite a little history of its own. At the period indicated, between 1839 and 1843, an unknown *Cuscuta* made its appearance almost simultaneously in different parts of western Europe, and, singularly enough, always on Lucerne fields. In Germany it was described as *C. suaveolens*, *C. Hassiaca*, *C. diaphana*, and *Engelmannia migrans*, until Choisy, in DC. Prod., recognizing its American origin, took it for *C. corymbosa*, R. & P. In my monograph of *Cuscuta*, 1859, I established the identity of the immigrant with the South American *C. racemosa*, Mart., which had been introduced into Europe with the much vaunted Chilian *Alfalfa*, in reality the old established European fodder plant, the *Lucerne*, and which proved very destructive to its nurse-plant. After 10 or 15 years the energetic measures of the farmers, together with wet and cool summers, in which the seeds did not mature, seem to have eradicated the plant entirely, and as far as I am informed, it has not been heard of again in Europe. But now, lo and behold, our wanderer makes its appearance in northern California, and, precisely as before in Europe, in Alfalfa fields, "proving very injurious." It has been, without doubt, here also imported from Chili.

Rev. E. L. Greene, who has found so many new native plants in the Shasta Valley, sends also this troublesome newcomer. How long it has been there or whether it has appeared in other parts of California, where under the well-sounding name of Alfalfa the Lucerne is frequently cultivated, is as yet unknown, nor whether it will establish itself permanently. It may be well to direct the attention of the farmers, who cultivate Alfalfa, to this dangerous enemy and to urge them to destroy any dodder which may show itself in their fields, before it can spread or mature seeds. *C. racemosa*, Mart., belongs like our common *C. Gronovii* to the section *Olisto grammica*, characterized by two styles of unequal length tipped with capitate stigmas and a not-opening (baccate) capsule. Ovary and capsule are thickened towards the apex and somewhat pointed; inflorescence loosely paniculated with longish pedicels; flowers $1\frac{1}{2}$ —2 lines long, of thin texture, tube of corolla deeply campanulate, widening upwards, spreading lobes inflexed at the acute tip; scales nearly the length of the tube; capsule commonly enveloped by the corolla.

The variety, *Chiliana*, Eng. Cusc. p. 505, to which this form belongs, has larger and more delicate flowers than the original Brazilian type.—G. ENGELMANN.

THE OLDEST LIVING BOTANIST.—The oldest living botanist is probably the Swede Elias Fries, born in 1794, and this eminent man is still active.

He is a profound philosophical Botanist, the basis of whose systematic arrangement of the Fungi is still followed; and the Lichenological system presented in his *Lichenographia Europæa Reformata*, published in 1831, is still, with such modifications as the advance of knowledge requires, the best that has been prepared, and is not likely to be superseded. The introductory remarks should be studied by all who take up this branch of botany, and the descriptions have not been surpassed. Fries's botanical publications are numerous, the most important of them being devoted to the Fungi and Lichens. In 1872 he commenced the publication of an illustrated work on Fungi, several fascicles of which have been published.—W.